

7th February 1924]

Mr. C. RAMALINGA REDDI :—“ So far as my information goes, he refused to do so acting under a principle, with which we may not agree. But it is obvious from our own Jail Code that some amount of humanity is expected to be shown ? ”

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—“ A great deal of humanity is exercised in these cases.”

Mr. C. RAMALINGA REDDI :—“ If there is no such provision, will the Home Member kindly consider the advisability of the adoption of such a provision, especially when it is most absurd to keep a man in such a condition there ? ”

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—“ On a point of order, Sir, I may say that the hon. Member may bring in a resolution to alter the Jail Manual to that effect.”

Sriman SASIBHUSHANA RATH Mahasayo :—“ Was not Vaj Pai in a special division of the jail ? ”

Mr. C. RAMALINGA REDDI :—“ I shall add only one question, Sir, so that my hon. Friend may answer both. In view of the very painful impression produced by this case, will my hon. Friend be pleased to examine the case in the light of the discussion now proceeding, so that in future at any rate no such thing will occur ? ”

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—“ I am quite prepared to accept the suggestion in the first few words. I am prepared to examine the matter.”

*Political prisoners in the Presidency.*

212 Q.—Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR : Will the hon. the Home Member and the hon. the Law Member be pleased—

(i) to give a list of the political prisoners in this Presidency with the nature of their offences and sentences ; and

(ii) (a) to state whether the Government have issued any orders for treating the political prisoners differently from others and, if so, whether the Government have any objection to publish the papers connected with those orders ;

(b) if no such orders have already been passed, whether the Government have any objection to form a Committee to frame some rules on the subject ?

A.—(i) There is no separate classification of convicts under the heading ‘ Political Prisoners ’. The number of persons in jails on 26th December 1923 undergoing imprisonment for offences committed against the State was 14.

(ii) (a) No. But in G.O. No. 1401, Judicial, dated 12th December 1922 (which has been placed on Editors’ Table), the Government called the attention of all magistrates and criminal courts to the powers they possess of nominating certain prisoners for imprisonment in a special division.

(b) The Government are not prepared to form such a Committee.



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Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—“As regards subdivision (ii) have the Government any objection to issue an order that political prisoners should be placed in a separate division. It should not be left to the discretion of the magistrates?”

The hon. Mr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—“There is no separate classification as ‘Political Prisoners’. The Government, however, have called the attention of all magistrates and criminal courts to the powers they possess of placing certain prisoners for imprisonment in a special division. I am sure they would exercise their powers adequately.”

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—“I want the Government to consider the advisability of placing political prisoners including those imprisoned under security chapters in the special division instead of leaving them to the discretion of the magistrates.”

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—“Since this is a suggestion for action, the hon. the Law Member need not answer unless he chooses to answer.”

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—“He is not bound to answer; but if the hon. the Law Member cares, he may do so.”

Mr. C. RAMALINGA REDDI :—“Sir, may I also ask the hon. the Law Member to consider the possibility of creating a special division for the political prisoners? They are there not for any violence to person or property but because of opinions held.”

The hon. Mr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—“We will consider that, Sir.”

*Imprisonment of certain Congress volunteers.*

213 Q.—Mr. T. ADINARAYANA CHETTIYAR : Will the hon. the Home Member and the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(a) how many of the Congress volunteers are still detained in prison under the Security Section of the Criminal Procedure Code for having taken part in an anti-drink campaign in Madura district;

(b) whether a large number of these were arrested merely because they had declared themselves as Congress volunteers without their having ever done any overt act of even peaceful picketing; and

(c) whether the Government are aware that the Provincial as well as the District Congress authorities openly and publicly stopped the picketing campaign many months ago and have not re-started it?

A.—(a) At the end of December, the number of persons in jail as a result of offences committed during the Madura picketing campaign was 92. The Government do not know how many of these were Congress volunteers.

(b) No.

(c) Yes.

Rao Bahadur A. S. KRISHNA RAO PANTULU :—“In view of the answer given that the campaign had been stopped and that there is no prospect of re-starting it, will the Government consider the desirability of taking steps to release those in jail?”